

Message Text

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SUBJECT: BRIEFING MEMORANDUM: EDITORIAL SUPPORT FOR
AFRICAN NEGOTIATIONS

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM BLAIR, ACTING

1. SUMMARY. OVERWHELMINGLY, THE NEWSPAPER EDITORIALS WE
REVIEWED SUPPORT YOUR CURRENT NEGOTIATING EFFORTS. THESE
SUPPORTERS INCLUDE SEVERAL NEWSPAPERS THAT WROTE CRITICAL
EDITORIALS WHEN YOU ANNOUNCED THE LUSAKA DOCTRINE. THE
PERIOD COVERED IS AUGUST 29 TO SEPTEMBER 17.

2. IN SUM, THE SUPPORTIVE EDITORIALS ACCEPT THAT IT IS IN
OUR INTEREST TO PREVENT VIOLENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA. MOST
PERCEIVE A RATHER LIMITED LIKELIHOOD OF SUCCESS IN RHODESIA
BUT ARE MORE OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE PROSPECT IN NAMIBIA.
NONE OF THEM SUGGESTED THE NEGOTIATIONS WERE MOTIVATED BY
CONSIDERATIONS OF DOMESTIC POLITICS. END SUMMARY.

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3. THIS REVIEW COVERS THE MOST RECENT EDITORIALS ON AFRI-

CAN POLICY THAT APPEARED IN 44 NEWSPAPERS ACROSS THE COUNTRY INCLUDING THOSE YOU HAVE RECEIVED FROM THE NEW YORK TIMES AND CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR. TOGETHER, THEY HAVE

ABOUT ONE-QUARTER OF NATIONAL DAILY CIRCULATION. ONLY THREE OPPOSED THE CURRENT "SHUTTLE" EFFORT. THEY WERE THE CONSERVATIVE RICHMOND (VIRGINIA) NEWS LEADER AND DALLAS NEWS AND THE LIBERAL NEW YORK POST.

4. CONSERVATIVE PAPERS SUPPORTING THE CURRENT EFFORT INCLUDE THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE (9/8) AND ST. LOUIS GLOBE-DEMOCRAT (9/8), BOTH OF WHICH HAD OPPOSED THE LUSAKA DOCTRINE, THE NEW YORK NEWS (9/1), AND THE CINCINNATI ENQUIRER (9/3).

5. TYPICAL OF THE VIEWS EXPRESSED BY SUPPORTIVE NEWSPAPERS WAS THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER'S COMMENT (9/16): "IN THIS INTERDEPENDENT WORLD ONE CANNOT CULTIVATE ONE'S GARDEN SAFELY IF NEIGHBORING GARDENS ARE IN TURMOIL. IF SOUTHERN AFRICA EXPLODES, THE FALL-OUT WOULD BE WORLDWIDE. SURELY, IT IS BETTER TO FAIL IN AN IMPOSSIBLE TASK, IF IT COMES TO THAT, THAN NOT TO TRY AT ALL."

6. SOME PAPERS, SUCH AS THE SAN DIEGO UNION (9/2), BELIEVED THAT "U.S. BROKERAGE IN AFRICA HAS YIELDED SURPRISING RESULTS IN FIVE MONTHS" ALTHOUGH YOU WERE SAID TO BE WALKING "A DANGEROUS TIGHTROPE." THIS EDITORIAL WAS REPRINTED IN THE EIGHT OTHER COPLEY NEWSPAPERS. UNION EDITORIALS ARE ALSO SENT, VIA THE COPLEY NEWS SERVICE, TO ABOUT 1,750 NEWSPAPERS AROUND THE COUNTRY.

7. MANY PAPERS PERCEIVED AN IMMEDIATE AMERICAN INTEREST IN DEFUSING THE CURRENT SITUATION. TYPICAL WAS THE KANSAS CITY STAR (9/10) WHICH SAID: "THE LOCATION AND THE RESOURCES OF THE AREA IN QUESTION ARE OF IMPORTANCE TO THE SECURITY AND ECONOMY OF THE WEST." OTHERS, SUCH AS THE WASHINGTON POST (9/8), SAW YOUR NEGOTIATIONS AS AN IMPERATIVE OF WORLD LEADERSHIP: "FOR THE UNITED STATES TO PLAY IT SAFE AND TO DO LESS THAN IT COULD TO AVERT A HOLOCAUST WOULD BE NOT ONLY BAD DIPLOMACY, CONTRIBUTING TO WORLD

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DISORDER, IT WOULD BE AN ABDICATION OF THIS COUNTRY'S MORAL OBLIGATION AND RESPONSIBILITY TO THE WORLD COMMUNITY.

8. MANY PAPERS DOUBTED A PEACEFUL SOLUTION CAN BE FOUND FOR RHODESIA, BUT WERE MORE HOPEFUL ABOUT NAMIBIA. TYPICAL OF THIS VIEWPOINT WAS THE DES MOINES REGISTER (9/9): "PUBLIC STATEMENTS BY ALL SIDES INDICATE A CONTINUING DEADLOCK (ON RHODESIA) ... NAMIBIA IS THE ONE PLACE

WHERE PROGRESS LOOKS PLAUSIBLE."

9. THE NEW YORK POST (9/2) OPPOSED ANY MEETINGS WITH PRIME MINISTER VORSTER, TERMING THEM "VAIN ATTEMPTS TO MAINTAIN THE CONFIDENCE OF BOTH BLACK GOVERNMENTS AND

WHITE SUPREMACIST REGIMES." BOTH THE DALLAS NEWS AND RICHMOND NEWS LEADER DECLARED THAT AMERICAN INTERVENTION WOULD ULTIMATELY BENEFIT THE COMMUNISTS. THE NEWS WROTE (8/29): "HOW THE BLACKS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA WOULD BE BETTER OFF SHOULD COMMUNISM SWEEP ACROSS THEIR LAND IS FOR AMERICAN LIBERALS TO SAY. PLAINLY, THE WEST WOULD BE INFINITELY WORSE OFF, WHAT WITH THE LOSS OF THE REGION'S VITAL RESOURCES ... AND THE LOSS, TOO, OF CONTROL OVER THE SEA ROUTE BETWEEN THE PERSIAN GULF AND WESTERN EUROPE." THE NEWS LEADER SAID (9/3): "IN A GAME IN WHICH THE COMMUNISTS ARE DEALER, WE ARE PLAYING OUR HAND EXACTLY AS THEY WANT US TO PLAY IT. WE ARE RESPONDING TO THEIR PRESSURE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA BY BRINGING OUR PRESSURE TO BEAR ON THE REGIMES THEY WANT TO CRUMBLE."

10. DOMESTIC POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS WERE MENTIONED IN ONLY A HANDFUL OF PAPERS. NEWSDAY SAID (9/8): "THE CYNICAL WILL BE TEMPTED TO FIND SOME LINKAGE BETWEEN HENRY KISSINGER'S SUDDEN CONCERN FOR STABILITY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AND THE FORTHCOMING ELECTION ... THE REAL POINT IS THAT IT MAY BE THE LAST CHANCE TO HEAD OFF A RACIAL ARMAGEDDON."

11. "WHEN CONSERVATIVES AT THE REPUBLICAN CONVENTION SUCCESSFULLY INSISTED ON A PLATFORM STRESSING 'MORALITY' IN FOREIGN POLICY," WROTE THE MILWAUKEE JOURNAL (9/3),
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"THEY PROBABLY WEREN'T THINKING ABOUT THE EVIL OF WHITE SUPREMACY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA. YET THEIR FAVORITE TARGET, SECRETARY OF STATE KISSINGER, MADE IT IMPRESSIVELY CLEAR (IN PHILADELPHIA) THAT THERE IS NO BETTER PLACE ON THE GLOBE TO PUSH MORAL CONCERN." ROBINSON

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